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Dauntless Teams: Get in Sync by Screwing the Status Quo

For true innovation, it is essential to apply creative problem-solving basics to team interactions and projects. Divergent and convergent thinking are the foundations of creative thinking, and each requires unique conditions for success.

Divergent thinking allows for many possibilities, like "how to make a clinic more efficient." This is the brainstorming or imagination phase. Convergent thinking results in a single answer, like "which phone provider will we choose for our clinic." This is the editing phase. The biggest mistake we make is trying to diverge and converge at the same time.

For true creative problem-solving, it is critical to give divergent thought room to create, play, and fail. There are no bad ideas at this stage. Psychological safety is crucial at this stage to allow everyone to contribute and diverge. Once the divergent phase is complete, you can take the ideas from the divergent stage and select the ones you want to explore further or move ahead with.

There is solid evidence that your team needs to embrace everyday creativity:

- Creative activities improve Positive Affect the following day. When positive affect is high, creativity is amplified.
- Teams that perceive themselves as having performed well on a creativity task are more likely to develop team cohesion over time.
- Creativity boosts problem-solving. Problem-solving builds resilience and decreases stress. Lower stress makes people happier.
- Happier employees are more productive.
- Creativity is linked to the tolerance of ambiguity. Employees with a higher tolerance of ambiguity have better job performance, critical thinking skills, well-being, and complex problem-solving skills. Companies benefit from low turnover, lower absenteeism, higher engagement, and more effective leadership.